

15. (Twice Amended) [The method according to claim 14,] A method for manufacturing a sensing element for determining oxygen content in exhaust gases of an internal combustion engine, comprising the steps of:

blunting edges of a composite arrangement for use as the sensing element to increase a thermal shock resistance of the sensing element; and

sintering the composite arrangement to yield the sensing element, the composite arrangement including at least one ceramic paste present in film form;

wherein the step of blunting includes the step of blunting the edges of the composite arrangement by shaping, and the step of blunting the edges of the composite arrangement further includes the step of blunting the edges of the composite arrangement by stamping.

REMARKS

Claims 13 to 24 are now pending.

Applicants request reconsideration of the present application in view of this response.

It is believed that this Amendment does not raise new issues that would require further consideration and/or search, and also does not raise the issue of new matter. It is also believed and respectfully submitted that this Amendment places the application in better form for appeal by materially reducing or simplifying the issues for appeal.

With respect to paragraph one (1) of the Final Office Action, claims 13 to 24 were rejected under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112 as indefinite.

It is respectfully submitted that claim 13 (and its dependent claims 14 and 16 to 23) as presented satisfies the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112. As regards claim 15, it has been rewritten as discussed below to reflect claim 13 as presented. It is therefore respectfully requested that the indefiniteness rejections as to claims 13 to 24 should be withdrawn.

With respect to paragraph four (4), Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 15 to 23 contain allowable subject matter, and that these claims would be allowed if rewritten to overcome the indefiniteness rejections and to reflect the base claim and any intervening claim. In this regard, it is respectfully submitted that claim 15 is allowable since it reflects claim 13 as presented and claim 14. As regards claims 16 to 23, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are allowable as presented for the reasons discussed with respect

Applicants have amended claim 13 to recite a composite arrangement including at least one ceramic paste present in film form. Claims 14-16 and 19-23 have been amended to reflect the amendment to claim 13. Accordingly, Applicants believe that claims 13-24 fully comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2. It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2, be withdrawn with respect to claims 13-24.

**III. REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)
WITH RESPECT TO CLAIMS 13, 14 AND 24**

Claims 13, 14 and 24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Kurishita in view of Nenadic.

Applicants respectfully submit that Kurishita in view of Nenadic does not teach or suggest each and every element as set forth in claim 13. For example, claim 13 recites, in part, the step of blunting *before* the step of sintering. Applicants respectfully submit that Kurishita does not teach or suggest the step of blunting before the step of sintering. In fact, Kurishita describes an act of chamfering after the oxygen sensor element is fully formed, presumably after sintering. Accordingly, Kurishita teaches away from the above-recited element as set forth in claim 13. On the other hand, the Examiner maintains that the above-recited element is satisfied by Nenadic. In support, the Examiner cites, out of context, column 1, lines 65-67. Applicants respectfully draw the attention of the Examiner to column 5, lines 14-23, which further qualify the Examiner's citation. In Nenadic, the self-aligning chamfer apparatus includes a cutter apparatus 10 with a heater element 90 provided proximally to blades 116. The heater element 90 provides heat locally to minimize the delamination problem associated with green chamfering methods. Thus, in reality, the heater element 90 is providing a sintering function concurrently with the chamfering. Accordingly, Nenadic does not teach or suggest the above-recited element as set forth in claim 13. Moreover, even assuming Nenadic teaches the step of blunting before sintering (which Applicants dispute), Applicants respectfully submit that Nenadic is improperly combined with Kurishita which teaches away from Nenadic, as interpreted by the Examiner, and the above-recited element as set forth in claim 13. For at least these reasons, Kurishita and Nenadic, alone or combined, fail to teach or suggest each and every element as set forth in claim 13. It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §

103(a) be withdrawn with respect to claim 13.

Claims 14 and 24 depend from claim 13. Since Kurishita in view of Nenadic does not render obvious the subject matter as set forth in claim 13, Kurishita in view of Nenadic does not render obvious the subject matter as set forth in claims 14 and 24. It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn with respect to claims 14 and 24.

IV. ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 15-23 contain allowable subject matter. The Examiner has stated that claims 15-23 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2. Applicants respectfully submit that, in light of at least the above remarks and amendments, claims 15-23 fully comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 15-23 are in condition for allowance.

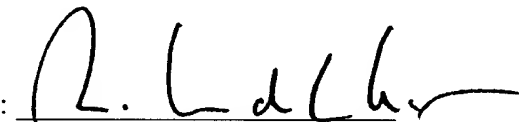
V. CONCLUSION

In light of at least the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Prompt reconsideration and allowance of the present application are therefore earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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